

BOOK RECEIVED

Stanisław Dziegielewski: Jeleń [Red Deer]. Series of natural and wildlife monographs. Państw. Wyd. Roln. i Leśn., Warszawa, 1970, 297 pp., figs and tables, price 30 zł.

The series of wildlife monographs edited by the State Agricultural and Forestry Publishers has a long tradition. First of them appeared in early 1960-ties and concerned red fox and grey partridge. Later, in mid-sixties there appeared the monograph of a black game (*Lyrurus tetrix* L.) by P. Sumiński and a monograph of badger by the same author. At the end of 1960-ties the publisher's activity increased. There appeared successively: wild ducks and wild geese, two monographs by R. Dzieciółowski and E. Frankiewicz, wild boar by A. Haber, roe-deer by Z. Pielowski, and recently — the red deer by S. Dziegielewski.

The content of the monograph reviewed is arranged into 6 chapters. The first chapter on 45 pages discusses the »Development and distribution of the red deer«. The chapter contains the discussion on origin and evolution of red deer, its taxonomy and geographical distribution, occurrence in Poland, and individual quality of animals. The second chapter entitled: »Biology of the red deer« gives some information on the exterior of the beast, its residence, social behaviour, rut, calving, development and replacement of teeth, age determination, formation of antlers, and diseases. The best perhaps is the third chapter on the »Management of red deer herd«. On 100 pages author describes food resources, management units, food carrying capacity, artificial feeding, deer counts, development of culling scheme separately for stags, hinds, and calves, and the estimation of age in red deer in field. The fourth chapter deals with »Damage done by red deer« in forest management and agricultural farms. The fifth chapter under the heading »Shooting« describes arms and hunting accessories, techniques of hunting, deer responses to hit, search after crippled deer with a dog and without it, cleaning a carcass, and preparation of trophy. Very interesting is the last, sixth chapter entitled »Scoring of deer antlers and record trophies« which contains the list of the best trophies in Europe and in Poland with photographs of some of them. References include 40 items, mostly Polish and German ones. The selection is far from being complete.

The third chapter »Management of red deer herd« is, in my opinion, the best one in the book and it determines the character of the monograph as rather a management handbook than a treatise of natural history of red deer. Particularly valuable are sections dealing with the improvement of natural habitat of red deer and the arrangement of a culling plan in order to arrive at a rational age and sex structure of red deer population.

Careful reader will find some inevitable errors in text. And so on page 16 reference is made to a table on pages 16/17, while the table is actually on pages 8/9. Such errors are, of course, of minor importance. More serious drawbacks concern the lack of considering the new Polish and foreign literature. On page 36 author complains on lack of data on body weight for the red deer, neglecting the paper by E. Mystkowska published in »Acta Theriologica« and devoted just to this problem. The same concerns information on the duration of physical growth in red deer of both sexes (p. 101) and the composition of diet (pp. 133 and 138). There are research findings available, but the author did not utilize them. Very poor illustrations were committed by M. Orłowski.

In spite of these shortcomings the book will be a valuable item in the home library of each game biologist and big game hunter.

R. Dzieciółowski